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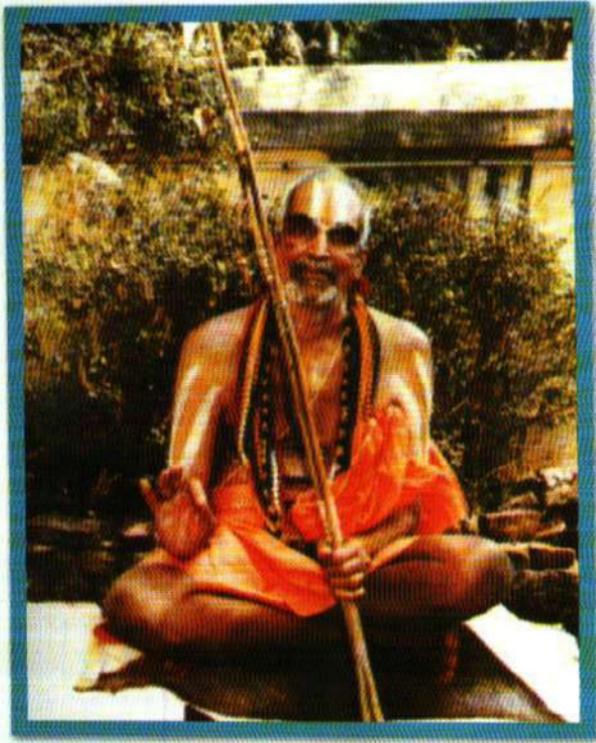


# Hamsa Priya

*The Newsletter of Srimad Andavan Poundarikapuram Swami  
Asramam, Bengaluru Branch*

Volume #1

Issue #1



श्रीवासरङ्गं परकालं मुनित्रयास्- लक्ष्मात्मरक्षण-यतित्वं युगागमान्तम् ।  
गान्धार्णि पितृस्त्रां जार्यैर्लीले शोपालदेशिकमुनि गुरुमात्रयामः ॥



Sri: Sriyal Namah: Sri Ranganatha ParabrahmaNE Namah:  
SrimatE Gopaladesika MahadesikAya Namah:  
SrimatE Srinivasa MahadesikAya Namah:  
SrimatE Ranganatha MahadesikAya Namah:  
SrimatE Srinivasa MahadesikAya Namah:  
SrimatE Narayana MahadesikAya Namah:  
SrimatE Srinivasa MahadesikAya Namah:  
SrimatE Srinivasa Ramanuja MahadesikAya Namah:  
SrimatE Vedanta Ramanuja MahadesikAya Namah:  
SrimatE Gopalarya MahadesikAya Namah:  
SrimatE Nigamanata MahadesikAya Namah:  
SrimatE BhagavatE BhashyakarAya MahadesikAya Namah:  
Srimadbhyaha: Yamuna NAttha shaTakOpa MahadesikEBhyO Namah:  
Srirangan SrimadANDavan (Vazhuttur) vEdAntalakSmaNamunE:  
AvicChinna Sanyasata GuruparamparA samAgatha:

## ***Srimad Andavan Poundarikapuram Swami Asramam, Bengaluru branch***

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**Volume #1**

**HAMSAPRIYA**

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Asramam, Bengaluru Branch*

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## Bengaluru *Asram* building construction in full swing

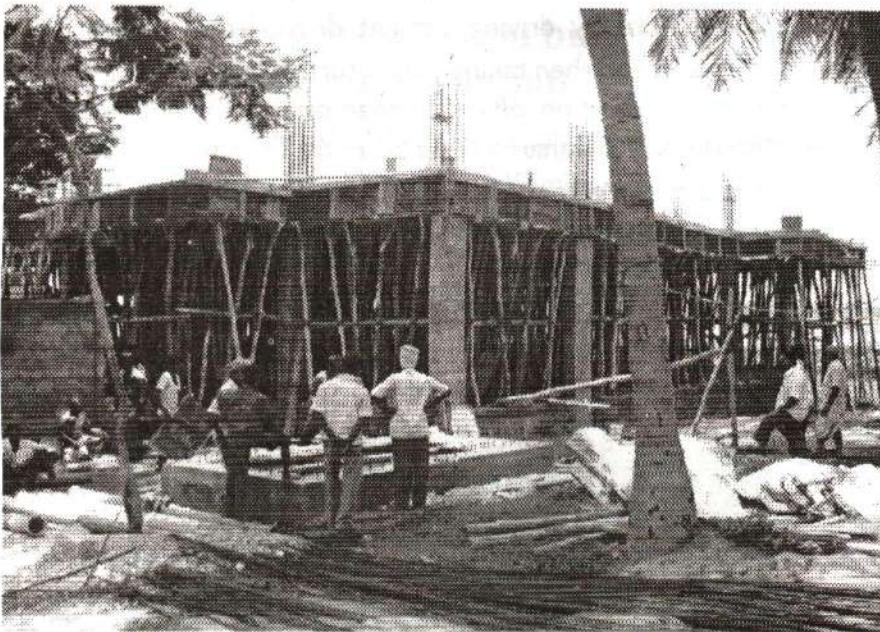
By the grace of our *Swami* Srimad Gopala Desika Mahadesikan, the building at Bengaluru *Asram* premises is coming up very well and will be ready soon. Our *Swami* has always had a soft corner for the people of Karnataka. We in return have shown *immaculate bhakti* for *Swami* and taken part in all *Asram* activities with zest, although Srirangam is not closeby for us. In order to be more close to us and impart His invaluable life saving messages and values that would mould us into true *prapannas*, a branch of the *Asram* has bloomed here. A committee with H.H.H. Rangapriya *Swamiji* and Dr. N.S. Anantha Rangachar as Vice-President, has been formed for this purpose; a great Samaritan donated a large piece of land for building the *Asram* premises and with funds rolling in from magnanimous disciples under the guidance of H.H.H. Rangapriya *Swamiji*, a concrete structure has taken shape at the site of the *Asram*.

Located at an hour's drive from the centre of the city, the picturesque *Asram* lies beside a huge lake; amidst coconut and banana groves, it is enclosed in the property of Royal Enclave at Srirampura. Just like its parent on the banks of Cauvery, this branch too shall provide cool shelter to those parched by materialism, with the help of the radiating cool light of the form of values of spiritual discipline and *atma gunas* that have been supremely exemplified and propagated by the glorious *Acaryas* of the Poundarikapuram *Asram* and that are being upheld in a universally admirable manner by our beloved *Swami* now, who is a living testimony to the glorious lineage of the Poundarikapuram *Asram*. Just like its parent, this *Asram* too, set in absolutely quiet surroundings, nestled amidst nature, shall be the perfect resort for that invaluable peace of mind and shall also occasionally host events that explode knowledge and rain bliss on the participants in a memorable manner.

You can get here by driving straight down from Mekhri circle towards Yelahanka and then taking a right turn at the traffic signal near Bytrayanapura corporation office, further driving for about 2.5kms past Amruthahalli and Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for advanced scientific research, and into the gates of Royal Enclave. The address # 139/140, Royal Enclave Layout, Srirampura village, Bytrayanapura, Bangalore .

Some photos of the Asram and its surrounds.





Construction of the building is well under way. Roofing is complete. In this photo you can see the team at work.

Activities of plastering, plumbing, electricity, painting, installation of idols of the Lord and Acaryas, are pending. Here, it is very apt to recall with immense gratitude the magnanimous mind of an electrical contractor who has just now come in contact with the Asram, but has pledged to carry out all the electrical work at the Asram building by himself and free of cost. We pray for Acarya's grace to be with him at all times. Each one of us could involve in our own ways for a truly rewarding uplifting experience.

Conducting the tirunaksatrams of Acaryas, keeping a store of the publications of the Asram, conducting classes on Vedas, Divya prabhandhams, stotras etc., other satsang activities are currently planned to be performed here. You shall receive updates on the happenings thru this newsletter.

Meanwhile, please do visit the Asram premises - it could well be a pleasant family picnic on a weekend. Do reinforce your support for this divine cause. Do involve in the Asram activities in a manner that is most convenient for you. And then coming under the aura of Acarya's sublime spiritual radiance, you will definitely reap the rich benefits of His Divine grace.

**Srirangam Asram news :** A Veda patasala for students of Veda and Samskrut is coming up at the Asram premises. The foundation stone of the building was laid on 25th March 2010 and the first batch of students will commence lessons on the auspicious Upakarma day of 2010. The building will be inaugurated on the holy occasion of 91st tirunakstram of the current pontiff, our beloved Paravakottai Swami.

**Tiruneermalai Asram news :** By the special grace of our beloved Swami, less than a year after inauguration, this Chennai branch of the Asram is going great guns. NityAradana at the Asram premises is going on in a grand manner and with the popular support of the devotees and disciples of Chennai. Daily *Tirumanjanam* for *Taayaar, Perumal, Sudarsana Azhvar* have been booked by them for several months in advance.

**Please note :-** All donations carry exemption from income tax. For enquiries, feedback and contribution of articles / news, please free to contact the following at Bengaluru:-

Sri.V.Ranganathan 98454 48318, Sri.A.Narasimhan 98450 12325

## The glory of Poundarikapuram Asram a true revelation

Adherence to *sanyaasa dharma* by the *Sadaacaryas* of the Poundarikapuram Asram, has been most enviable and exemplary. Genuine dispassion is the hallmark of this *Acarya* lineage. Being so, this Asram is held in very high esteem by all followers of Sri Vaishnava *sampradaaya*. Be it in gaining good disciples, wealth, land etc., these *Sadaacaryas* have always shown utter dispassion and this has paved the way for nourishing exemplary uncompromising values like strict spiritual discipline, sublime devotion and supreme dedication to the *sampradaaya*. Led by Periya Andavan<sup>#</sup> who took Sanyas at an early age (very closely following His marriage) and lived a life of a lonely hermit on the banks of Cauvery, meditating on *astakshara mantra* continuously, surviving on temple rice along with *Tulsi* leaves and finally only fig leaves. He washed the rice in the waters of Cauvery to remove traces of fat that was His aversion to luxury. While His *astakshara siddhi* kept attracting many disciples, He remained rooted in dispassion and maintaining His strict food regimen, He soon came to be known as *Vattal Swami* One who resembled a dried fryum. Continuing His dispassion, the *Swamis* till date have utter disregard for all luxuries and do not even touch money, dreading its ill effects in the Kali age.

Although adhering to a very rigorous self-discipline, these *Sadaacaryas* have exemplified bountiful compassion, immense tolerance and great love for one and all. Led by Vedanta Ramanuja Mahadesikan (Vazuttur Andavan)<sup>#</sup> who performed *prapatti* to a black cobra that had been following Him around for a long time, the doors of the *Asram* have been open to many a needy one with troubles of all kinds varying from domestic disturbances to harassing court cases, finding ultimate solace only in the kind *Acarya*. At wee hours, at short notices, on requests from remote places the *Sadaacaryas* have condescended to perform *prapatti*, *prayascitta* thereby saving many a soul.

Although full of pity and mercy for one and all, the *Acaryas* have no self-pity. They exemplify immense courage and determination that inspires one and all. Poundarikapuram *Swami*<sup>#</sup> who although persecuted, went ahead to establish this glorious *Asram* on the same fields that the reverend, devoted villagers gifted to Him; following His footsteps, the later *Swamis* have never ever staggered in their faith in the Lord, even under extreme tribulations like floods, court cases etc. The current *Swami* in His ripe old age of ninety years has carried out His duties in an admirable manner even under very trying conditions, in an absolutely flawless manner without compromising even a little bit of His values of mental and physical discipline, as you can see in the words of appreciation of great stalwarts, given below He only carries on the torch borne by the *purvAcaryas*!

With such uncompromising ideals, can One perform well at

work? *Swami Srinivasa Mahadesikan* (*Vennatrunkarai Swami*)<sup>#</sup> was such an exponent at *Vedas*, especially *Sama Veda*, that yet another sanyasi *Acarya* studied *Veda* at His feet. *Srimad Gopalarya Mahadesikan*<sup>#</sup> had three sanyasis serving Him as disciples when He was a householder even. Our *Swami Srimad Gopala Desika Mahadesikan* is even today authoring a vast treatise on *Ramayana* which would put to shame even the greatest of poets for its romanticism a tender heart indeed in an erudite scholar with a rugged regimen! The perfection in the books edited by *Swami* and published by the *Asram* is so immaculate that each of them has become the reference book of its kind. It is well known that awards and titles given by this *Asram* during *Acarya tirunaksatra* celebrations are the most coveted ones today. Every *samsrayanam* and *bharanyasam* is preceded by a detailed *sadupadesa* (outpour of nectarine sermon by *Swami*) and then the process of absorption into the Sri Vaishnavite fold occurs in a serene and meticulous manner, leaving an indelible memory in the *sishya*, paving the way for every *sishya* to uphold the high standards of mental and physical discipline, resulting in blissful countenance that this *Asram* is specially adored for. It is cited in *Upanishad* that one must be worshipper of the Sun-god for thousands of births and then many thousands of births a *Siva bhakta*, only after which, one gets to be a *Vaishnavite*. Continuing in the same vein, it is not an exaggeration to state that one must have gone through thousands of births pleasing Lord *Vishnu* in order to become a *sishya* of the *Poundarikapuram Asram*!

Are these highly dispassionate, kind, erudite scholarly sanyasis locked up in ivory towers? No. They are from diverse professional backgrounds professor (Srimad Ranganatha mahadesikan), teachers, gurukul *adyapakas*, rich landlords even and come down to our levels. Their administrative skills are demonstrated in the warm hospitality extended to each and every one during the hugely attended events conducted at the Asram milk for the babies, houses for families, conveniences for modern ones and above a kind word to each and every one; how does an utterly dispassionate ascetic *Swami* manage all this from His secluded cabin. It is only the Lord's show of strength!

Qualities of supreme dispassion, tender compassion, erudite scholarship and adept administration seem to have flown down the stream of *Acaryas* and found a comfortable home in the full tank that is our current *Swami* Srimad Gopala Desika Mahadeiksan. Teeming with all these qualities in full, H.H.H. is a kind, cool and very tender self, turning around many a one into a disciplined and devoted disciple, all from the corner of His cabin, only by the immense aura of His spiritual powers. Come and enjoy His glory as proclaimed by the stalwarts of our *sampradaaya*!

### *Stalwarts speak about Our Acaryan*

## **"ATRA SRIRANGE SUKHAM AASWA"**

by

**U.Ve. Sri Tirumalachariar Swami**

Retired Professor, Vyakaranam, Srirangam

It is well known that all the pontiffs of this Ashramam have forever stayed in Srirangam itself attending to their Nityakarma Anushtaana with meticulous care, spending their time constantly meditating on the meanings of Sri Bashyam and delivering Kalakshepams.

The Present pontiff is keeping aloft this tradition with utmost sincerity, has been contributing to the Satsampradayam following the commands of Sri Bashyakaarar and is verily a treasure house of Gnaana and Vairaghyam.

The weekly Vidwat Sadas on Sri Bashya and Srimad Rahasya Traya Sara and discussions thereon, the efforts to publish the granthas of Poorva Aachaaryas are all proof of the depth of his involvement in spreading our Siddhantam.

May the Sriranga Divya Dampathi grant him long life so that his glorious service to Visishtaadvaita Sampradayam grows from strength to strength.

## **"ArAtha aruL amudham pOthinthakOil"**

By

**U.Ve. Thaiyar Vangipuram,**

Nyaya Vedanta Vidwan, Sri Ahobila Matam Aaraadhakar Sri Rangarajachariar Swami

This Srimad Aandavan has devised a novel method for illuminating the knowledge of Vedanta; for the last several years, he has been conducting classes for explaining one Adhikaram of Sri Bashyam and similarly one Adhikaranam of Srimad Rahasya Traya Saram every week.

These sessions are not only through discourses but a critical discussion with audience participation of Vidwans attending the Sadas. This has been a real boon to people like us- a shower of milk and honey indeed.

Here is an "*Aadarsha Aachaarya*" (Preceptor Perfect) who exemplifies 'Achaarya Lakshanam' in its entirety and truly represents what *Swami Desika* says- 'Kaakkum Karuthudai Desikar Kanru Yena Nammai Yenni Surakkum Suravigal Pol Soriginranar Sollamudhe'-(meaning) Like the mother cow that feeds her calves with abundant love, our Aachaarya in his infinite grace deems us as his very calves and feed us with his nectar- like words of wisdom.

If one needs to see what is the ideal and blemishless Anushtaanam of a Sannyasi - Come, See it in its pristine glory in our *Swami, Srimad Paravakkottai Aandavan. Swami.*

Observing Ahimsa and avoiding jeevahimsa are among his top priorities. Even while lifting water from the well, one has to be careful in this regard. Such is his strict emphasis on Ahimsa.

A Sannyasi is expected to beg alms (Biksha) from a Grihasta and then only, he can perform the 'Antharyaami Nivedanam'. The Grihasta should be equally an impeccable Anushtaatha. At least a Grihasta can expiate sins of himsa accruing during his routine chores by performing Vaisvadevam. But, since a Sannyasi has no 'Agni Kaaryam', he has to be doubly careful to ensure that the Grihasta who offers him biksha scrupulously observes the Saastraic injunctions in this regard. Otherwise, he would have to starve!

Even if it is a poisonous snake or scorpion, he would not allow anyone to even harm it, let alone kill it. He would say-' Leave it alone; it would not harm anybody'. Though on many occasions such poisonous creatures were sighted in the Asramam premises, never have they hurt anyone. This is an example of his compassion and adherence to the principles prescribed for yathis in Yathi Dharma Sastras.

The very presence of such Yathiswaras alone contributes to the greatness of this Koil. That is why the Koil becomes "Aaraatha Arul Amudham Podhindha Koil"

*SrimadPoundarikapuram Srimad Andavan Asramam*

*Guru Parampara Anusandhana*

## **SRI GOPAALAARYA MAHA DESIKAN**

**(TIRU KUDANDAI DESIKAN)**

**(Purattasi - Pooraadom) (1701 1783 AD)**

Sri Krishna Suri couple had been to the *Sravanotsavam* at Oppiliappan Koil, the Lord appeared in their dream and gave them some milk to drink saying that *Swami Vedanta Desika* Himself will be born as their son in the constellation of Vishwaksenar, the child born was *GopalaArya Maha Desikan*.

He sought the Feet of *Sakshat Swami* and studied all religious lore. He went on to complete the unfinished work of His *Acarya* for which He was conferred the title, *Tiru*

**Kudandai Desikan.** Lord AraAmudan of Kumbakonam was *Swamy's* mentor as if, guiding Him at every step; He ordered *Swami* to give discourses - Nam Tooppul Pillai Pol Sampradaaya



Pravachanam Panna Kadaveer. Next, He appeared in the dreams of three great seers Srinivasa MahaDesikan (amsam of Sri Nathamuni), Sri Ranganatha MahaDesikan (amsam of Sri Aalavandaar) and Sri Vedanta Ramanuja Maha Desikan (amsam of Sri Bhashyakarar) and asked them to take to ascetic order and study Vedanta at the feet of Tiru Kudandai Desikan. Meanwhile, the Lord also appeared in the dream of *Swami* and instructed Him to accept them three as His disciples. Then on *Swami*, came to be known as **Muni Traya Sampradaaya Pravartakar**.

It was the great Brahmotsavam of Lord Amudan. The huge chariot on which the Lord was coming on rounds suddenly stopped and would not move, our *Swami* offered prayers to the Lord and it set rolling! Sri Tiru Kudandai Desikan has authored several works of which The Gopalarya MahaDesikan Aanhika which lays down the daily routine of a Srivaishnava in great detail, is regarded as a reference manual by succeeding all *Acaryas*.

### **SRI VEDANTA RAMANUJA MAHA DESIKAN**

**(VAZHUTHUR ANDAVAN) (Aavani- Poorattaadi) (1743 CE)**

After intensive study under Tiru Kudandai Desikan, this *Swami* approached His *Acarya* citing Tiruvoimozhi Pasuram 5-8-10; extremely pleased by His service and erudition, His *Acarya* declared - *sampradayatthai aala vanda andavan nere*; henceforth He became popular as **Andavan**, He was called Vazhuttur Andavan as His hometown was Vazhuttur, also Srirangam Srimad Andavan, as he stayed in Srirangam. Henceforth, this lineage came to be called **Andavan Paramparai**.

His discourses attracted a large number of disciples including a King Cobra! This was seen daily when His discourse was in progress. One day as the Acarya was descending the steps of the tank for his *anushtanam*, the Cobra went around him and struck its hood on the ground three times appearing to beg something. Plucking a fruit from a tree nearby, offering it to His *aradhaya daivam*, Swami performed *Aartha Prapatti* for the Cobra, which attained *moksha* instantly!

Living in a small thatched hut on the banks of Coleroon, Swami was the epitome of simple living and high thinking. He used to go round the streets of Srirangam for his biksas and only after ~~proceeds to the~~



Lord and guests, He would partake if anything was left. Till the very end of his life, He entertained anyone seeking His guidance and rendered *Siddhanta Pravacanams* to them, thus leaving behind a host of *Paramaikaantins*, of whom one Srinivasachariar, son of Sri Krishnamachariar of Kanchipuram (later on known as Periya andavan) succeeded Him

## SRI SRINIVASA RAMANUJA MAHA DESIKAN

(TIRUTTURAIPUNDI ANDAVAN) (Aippasi - Uthiradam)

Sri Srinivasachariar assumed the name of Sri Srinivasa Ramanuja Maha Desikan when He took sanyas but he was *familiarly known as TirutturaiPundi Andavan* owing to his long association with that place where he had been giving instructions in all *sastras*. He was an obvious successor to his *Acarya*, Vazhuttur Andavan on account of His outstanding pre-eminence amongst all the disciples of His times. His ancestors hailed from the fertile village of Vilaakkudi in East Thanjavur District, a few miles from Rajamannargudi. He belonged to the illustrious Eyunni family of Bharadwaja Gotram. His forefathers had served Sri Ramanuja with devotion and distinction. He was born in the sacred month of *Tula* (Aippasi) when the star *Uttadam* was ascendant. In His *poorvAsrama*, he sought the feet of Vazhuttur Andavan and became an erudite scholar. He won acclaim as an authentic exponent of our *Darsana* and continued the Sri Vaishnava Sampradaaya in a worthy manner.



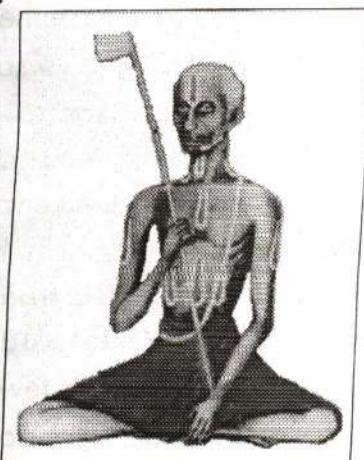
## SRI SRINIVASA MAHADESIKAN

(SRIMAD PERIYA ANDAVAN)  
(VATTAL SWAMI) (Masi- Pushyam) (1801 - 1886 CE)

After *Brahmopadesa* at the age of 8, He mastered *Vedas* and *Divya Prabhandam*, *Kavyas* and *Tamil* *lore*, *Vyakarana* and *Mimamsa Sastras*, *Rahasya Granthas* under *TirutturaiPundi Andavan*. Sri Srinivasa at the tender age of 30 took on the ascetic order.

Srimad Srinivasa Maha Desikan led a simple, austere life on the banks of *Kollidam*. He would wash cooked rice in the river so as to rid it of all fat and oil content; that rendered Him frail and He came to be known as *Vattal Swami*. He taught rather by his practice than by precept. He wielded such influence on his disciples that they hailed him *Periya Andavan*.

A brilliant galaxy of distinguished scholars flocked to his feet and the *goshti* consisted of such eminent persons as *Vedanta Tatachariar Swami* of *Sankarapuram* (later became *Velianallur Andavan*), *Sri TirupputKuzhi Tatachar Swami*, *Gopala Samudram Vidwan Sri Narayanachar Swami*, *Mannargudi Vyaakarana Narasimhachar Swami* (later became 39th pontiff of *Ahobila Mutt*), *Agnihotram Srinivasa Tatachar Swami*, *Vidwan Paravastu Venkatachar* of *Srivilliputtur*, *Tiruvaheendrapuram Ashtaavadhaanam Anantachar Swami* (later became *TiruKudanthai Andavan*).



Periya Andavan was a logician of great repute; His disciple Mannargudi Rajagopalachariar defeated Govardhanam Rangachariar, a reputed logician of the North and later, on request instructed him further in Vedanta after which the scholar left with feelings of deep reverence and gratitude for Andavan.

Swami set up the Andavan Asram on the lands donated by a patron and continued his classes there uninterrupted, in the sylvan environment. He conducted classes in Sri Gita Bhashya, Sri Bhashya, RahasyaTrayaSara and Bhagavad Vishaya more than 30 times to hundreds of disciples. His *sishyas* listened entranced, wondering that so much Vedantic wisdom emanated from so frail a body. He framed a code of conduct to be strictly adhered to by his disciples.

Whatever He touched He enriched and left behind a tradition of excellence, a spiritual touch for His worthy successors to cherish and carry forward.

### SRI NARAYANA MAHADESIKAN

(VELIYANALLUR ANDAVAN)

(Purattasi Tiruvaadirai) (1825 - 1900 CE)

Among the distinguished disciples of Periya Andavan was one, Vedanta Tatachariar of Sankarapuram. The Tatachariars who belong to Sadamarshana Gotram are descendants of Sri Nathamuni. The Tatachariars distinguished themselves by devoted service at *divya-deshas* notably the Tirumalai temple. Swami was a Naishtika Brahmachari (confirmed bachelor), who knew no God other than his *Acarya*. He prayed for admission to

the ascetic order, so that the remaining part of his life could be fully placed at the service of his *Acarya*. Periya Andavan acceded to his prayer and took Him into the holy order. He was named Sri Narayana Maha Desikan. Soon afterwards, Sri Narayana Maha Desikan left on a tour of Divyadesas and reached Attiyur where he remained discoursing on *Ubhaya Vedanta Sastras* and administering *Pancha Samskara*, *Bharanyasa* to those who sought his feet.



On hearing that Periya Andavan had attained the lotus feet of His *Acarya*, He returned to Srirangam and succeeded Periya Andavan, as Chinna Andavan had also attained *Acarya tiruvadi*. Although greatly upset *Swami* stayed there at PeriyAsramam to continue the work of Periya Andavan. Later, He proceeded to Vennar bank, Thanjavur, where He stayed till the end of His life. Here, He organized the annual festivals of *Swami Vedanta Desikan* whose image had been installed at the *Perumal Koli* by Nainar *Acarya*.

### **SRI SRINIVASA MAHADESIKAN** (SRIMAD POUNDARIKAPURAM ANDAVAN) (Aadi- Pooradam) (1847 - 1934 AD)

After *upanayanam* at seven years of age, Sri Srinivasan *Swami* studied under great stalwarts and soon became a *mahavidwan*

Himself, having mastered *Tarkam*, *VyakaraNam*, *Mimaamasam*, besides *Vedas* and *Divya prabhandhams*. In spite of belonging to an affluent family, Sri Srinivasan led his *gruhasthAsramam* at Poundarikapuram in a remarkably simple and austere manner. As an ascetic at Srimad Andavan Asramam, Srirangam, He spent years offering *Samasrayana*, *Bharanyasam* and daily *kaalakshepam*. Later, He established a separate *Asram* that came to be known as **Sri Poundarikapuram Andavan Asramam**.

This *Asram* was a very busy religious, philosophical centre with daily scholarly discussions under the guidance of *Swami*; *Acarya*'s extraordinary mind could accurately recall any passage, sloka or *sutra* with ease. Not a day passed without a *Kaalakshepa Goshti*. Srimad Andavan's mastery over *Advaita* resulted in disciple Sri Anbil Gopalcharyar *Swami*'s books in elucidation of *Advaita* philosophy; these books were very crucial for establishing *Visishtadvaita* well: **Srinivasa Mahadesikan Vidwath Sadhas** - an annual congregation of scholars of repute for intellectual and philosophical discussion, disputation and authoritative assertion of our *sampradaya* was begun. Kozhiyaalam Raghavachariar *Swami* sought *Sanyasa* at His feet, *Aasthaana Vidwan* of Tirumalai Tirupati Devasthanam, Kapisthalam Desikaacharya submitted to *Swami* His work **Adhikarana Ratna Maalai** for approval. "Whenever there were doubts on Sri Bhashyam and its interpretations, Srimad Andavan



was the One to pass the final judgement as to who is right" recalls Srimad Azhagiya singar (41st Pontiff of Ahobila Mutt). Acarya chanted the *praNavam* in His leisure and hosted four Srivaishnavas at the Asram on completion of every crore of *PraNava japam*; it was a wonder how He meticulously tracked the count amidst a busy schedule!

A child was brought mute to the Asram, but uttered a sloka on Lord Hayagriva after Swami blessed Him! The child grew to be the great Acarya, His His Holiness Sri Rangapriya Swamy! Lending the 'holy hand' *karasparsam*- to the small shrine of Oppilappan, Swami has blessed it to grow into So uthern Tirupati! Swami attained Acaryan *Tiruvadi* immediately after completion of a Sri Bhashya *kalakshepa satrumarai* - depth of His Sri Bhashya Bhakti is truly indescribable!

### **SRI RANGANATHA MAHADESIKAN**

**(MANNARGUDI ANDAVAN)**

**(Vaikasi Mrigasheersham 1880 - 1954 CE)**

Ramanujacarya Swami, a descendant of Nadadur Ammal, like His forefathers was famous for melodious Vedic recitation and led the *Veda gosti* at Rajamannar Koil. His son Srinivasa Gopalan, after early studies became a master of *Vyakarana sastra* under the tutelage of the famous pundit Orappattur Sri Rangachariar Swami (later 39th pontiff of Ahobila mutt). After *Grantha kalakshepa* at the feet of Poundarikapuram Swami, He accepted the invitation from Samskrut College at Pattambi, Kerala for serving as a professor. After 20 years of distinguished service, at the age of 54, Swami took up the ascetic order; soon He was also in charge of

the Asram after Poundarikapuram Swami attained the lotus feet of His Acarya.

Being serious and sincere, Swami attracted many disciples who became great stalwarts. He performed astakshara mantra *japam* in His leisure hours and performed *Tadeeya aradhanam* after completion of 10 million *japa*. As a visionary, He encouraged disciples to celebrate Acarya tirunaksatra at their homes so that more people come to know of our *sampradaya*. Another visionary act was the compilation of *Srimad Rahasyatrayasara* in Devanagari script with the superb commentary of Vangeepuram Navaneetam Srirama Desikachariar Swami. This beauty paved the way for many more such authentic reference books to be published and released by this Asram.



## SRI SRINIVASA MAHADESIKAN

(VENNATRUNKARAI SWAMY)

(Panguni-Anusham 1882 - 1980 CE)

Sri Seshadri mastered *sva-shaka Sama Veda, Kavya, Nataka* and *Yajur Veda* and *Divya Prabhandha* and was an authority in *Dharma sastras*. Endowed with a mellifluous voice, Swami soon caught the

exam. Out of His own funds He conducted with great pomp and gaiety the Desika *utsavas* in temples. His memory was so quick and sharp that He once got by heart the entire *Adhvaryu mantras* in one night and officiated the *yaga* next day as the *Ritvik* had got indisposed. He led the *adyapaka goshti* in the temple. He was famous for his philanthropy. Discarding His rich financial resources, He took up the ascetic order and headed the *Asram* conducting daily *aradhana*, *Acarya tirunakshatra* with great piety and devotion. Srimad Andavan led the *goshti* at the *Asram* and Himself recited excerpts from all *granthas* during *satrumarai* everyday.



*Swami* taught Thenbarai Andavan His *sva-shaka Sama Veda*; during those times He never minded walking upto the Andavan *Asram* Himself, as Thenbarai Andavan's health was failing. The additional daily bathing ritual thus incurred everyday was welcome by the magnanimous *Swami*. During one such visit, *Acarya* advised Kannan *Swami* the then Sri Karyam not to return home as Thenbarai Andavan's health was fast dwindling; *Acarya* was proved correct when Kannan *Swami* had to take over reigns immediately as Tirukudandai Andavan! He also initiated the famous Injimedu Azhagiya singar of Ahobila Mutt.

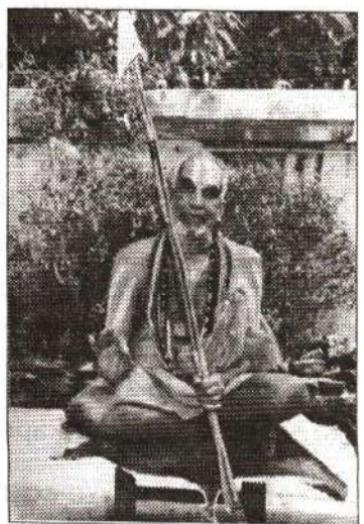
Predicting His impending ascension into heavens, *Swami* prepared His successor and received one of the greatest *iyal*

## SRI GOPALA DESIKA MAHADESIKAN

(PARAVAKOTTAI ANDAVAN)

(Panguni Rohini 1921 AD)

Sri Rajagopalan virtuous from birth, mastered Vedic recitation, samskrut poetry and became a *Vyakarana* pundit and then studied *Vedanta granthas*. Even at a tender age, even while studying hard, *Swami* never ever compromised on *Aacharam* (spiritual discipline) and was hailed as *Vasistha* for His exemplary behavior. He was given *nimantranam* by great scholars and even 40-year old *Goshtipurna Swami* did *prativandanam* to this 20 year old! As per His dying father's wishes, He successfully completed tutelage under *Srimad Abhinava Ranganatha Swami* of *Parakala* mutt and obtained *vidvat* in *Vedanta* with flying colors; He also picked up a *Visharad* in *Hindi*. *Swami's* erudition and conduct was so adorable that He had to take a *Vaishvadeva updesha* from *Madhurantakam Swami* to prevent His *prativandanam*. He was hailed in many a *Vidvat Sadas* and appointed *Srikarya Durandhara* of our *Asram*. As predicted by His *Acarya*, *Abhinava Ranganatha Mahadesikan*, *Swami* took to ascetic order at the age of 60 and conducts the *Sanyas Asram* in an impeccably exemplary manner till today.



*Swami's* exemplary adherence to *anushtanam* and *seelam* (conduct reflecting *Atma gunas*) has been the beacon

contribution to our *Sampradaaya* by means of being a role model for all to emulate for centuries to come. The meticulous manner of performing *samasrayanam* and *bharanyasam* after an inspiring sermon, the rendition of *upadesa* of *manasika aradhanam* drenched in bhakti, renders every *sishya* of His, to have a very special sense of gratitude towards Him. *Swami* has continued the Asram's tradition of publishing reference books by releasing each *Desika stotra* and *rahasya grantha* annotated with the best commentaries by stalwarts of the past - these books will be great assets for posterity. Renovation of *Desika Sannidhi* in Srirangam, consecration of idols of Lord, Andal, *Acaryas*, performing the Andal and *Desika utsava* with great pomp and gaiety, exemplify *Swami's* zest in continuing with mission of His *Acaryas*. *Swami's* visionary zeal of creating branches of the Asram to reach out to people only exemplifies His great compassion for humanity. *Swami's* latest project - the *Veda, Samskrut patashala* at Srirangam Asram, aims at strengthening our very roots. Even the greatest scholars fall short of words to describe the glory of this *Acarya*, as you may observe each time in the citations provide in this newsletter - in a nutshell our *Swami* signifies the grandeur of the glory of our *Poundarikapuram Asram*.

**Reference :-** We acknowledge with deep gratitude the web site : [munitrayam.org](http://munitrayam.org) for information on our Asram. We have also referred to the souvenir published on the occasion of the 100th *tirunakshtram* celebration of *Vennatrunkarai Swamy*.